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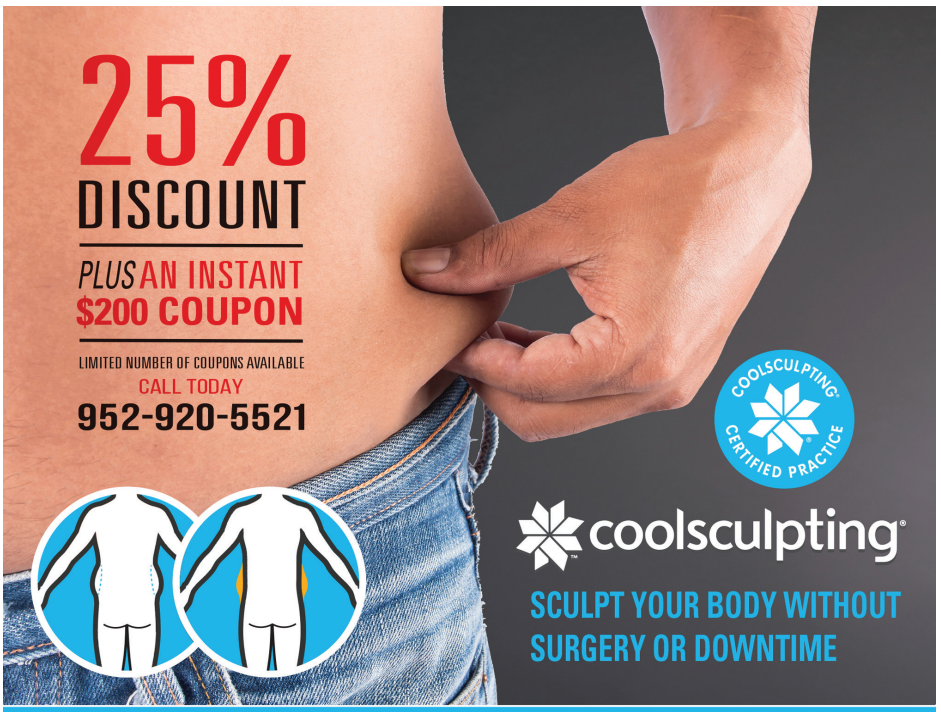

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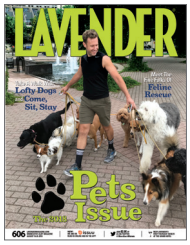

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ON THE COVER
Mike Meyer is the founder of the Minneapolis dogwalking company Lofty Dogs. Photo by Kassidy Tarala

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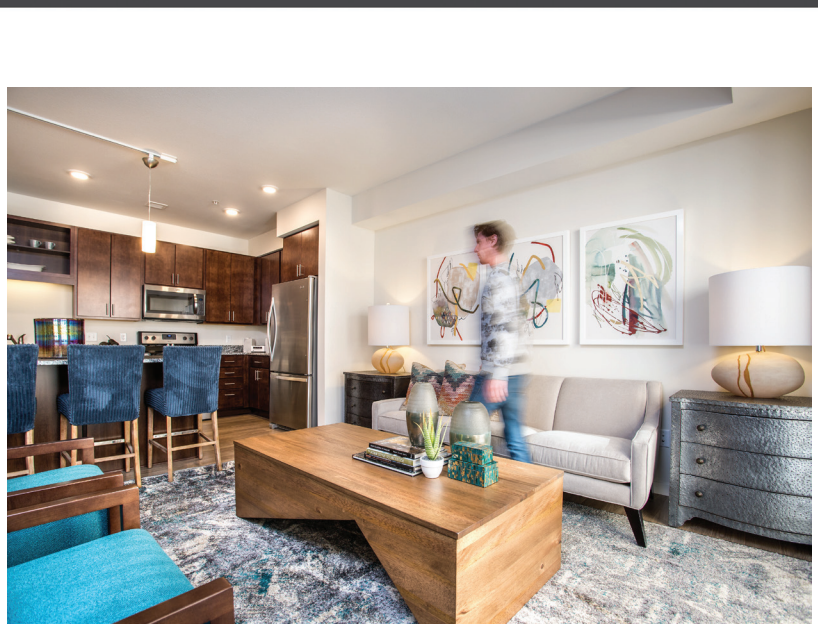

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FROM THE EDITOR | BY CHRIS TARBOX

Pick Of The Litter

So while I'd like to think that I'm a fairly sociable fellow, I'm also the kind of guy who goes to parties, discovers that there's a dog or cat present, and prefers to hang out with the pets instead of the people at said party. I'm just that kind of guy.

And do you blame me? Are you no different? I mean… just LOOK at that pitbull and its sad blue eyes! How can you ignore that cat shamelessly begging for belly rubs? Are you just going to walk past that chocolate lab trying to follow you? No, you won't, because pets are sacred and you're not a monster. And here's a brilliant segue welcoming you to the 2018 Pets issue!

Seeing as how our furry friends are as much a part of the family as humans are, it takes a lot to make sure that they're happy and properly cared for. In this issue, we meet two Minneapolis-based dog walking companies: Lofty Dogs, founded by the delightful Mike Meyer; and Come, Sit, Stay, an ever-diverse crew of dog care experts. We also learn about the good work done by the no-kill Feline Rescue organization.

On top of that, Carla Waldemar takes us on a trip to the capital of the Great White North, we take a sneak peek at the Duluth Superior Pride festivities, and we chat with the fine folks at Washburn-McReavy about funeral preplanning.

So if you're like me and are devoted to all those doggos and kittehs in your life, this Pets issue is right up your alley. But just remember: I get first dibs on petting the animals at the party. Back off. ■

A WORD IN EDGEWISE | BY E.B. BOATNER

From a King to a Queen in a Family Way

In these wearing dog days of summer, it is pleasant to relax in a cool, darkened theater for a production that is (deceptively) light, pleasing, and simple. The Guthrie's *The Legend of Georgia McBride* fills that bill through August 26.

At Cleo's, a failing bar in Panama City Beach on the Florida Panhandle, there's Casey, a young Elvis impersonator. He's great, but no one's interested in Elvis, jumpsuits or sequins. Exit Casey. In a last-gasp effort to survive, bar owner Eddie brings in his drag performer cousin Tracy and partner to perform economic CPR. Improbably—suspend your disbelief willingly—sequins, spangles, and all that jazz become a huge success, until…

…Tracy's partner Rexy (a.k.a. Miss Anorexia Nervosa) breaks down and someone—someone—has to step into the breach. Yes, Casey. Broke, wife Jo newly pregnant, Casey steps into a pair of stilettos, and discovers that sequins are sequins, wherever they're sewn. It works. Casey's a hit, and he finds fulfillment onstage, with his wife, and with his new family. And here's where the above-mentioned "deceptive" comes in to play. Drag in the Florida panhandle does play.

Playwright Matthew Lopez was raised in that milieu, and as a teen frequented—"sneaked into"—the one local gay bar to watch a friend perform drag. His character Rexy declares the protest roots of drag: "Drag is a raised fist inside a sequined glove. Drag is a lot if things, baby, but drag is not for sissies." Homophobia is real and ongoing: Tracy orders Grey Goose, a *French* vodka, referencing protest against the Russian "gay propaganda law," signed by the current president in 2013 that restricts GLBT citizens' rights.

Director Jeffrey Meanza, in earlier comments on the show, describes how much the play actually focuses on the concept of family, particularly what that word means to those identifying as queer. There is, indeed, an interesting tension in a play about drag performers taking place in a straight bar and centering on the fortunes of a heterosexual couple.

Meanza, who has performed drag, stresses the *Legend* aspect of the title in this production, where storytelling, fabulous sets, costumes, colors, song lyrics all reveal truth; like a sparkling stream over hidden depths, Legend is a sequined glove containing hard realities. ■

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THE CONTESTED BODY

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The body is by nature a biological entity. However, cultural constraints influence how the human form exists and transforms in time and space. The Minneapolis Institute of Arts features a thought-provoking installation of paintings, assemblages, photographs, and audio that comment on such constraining influences with the hope of perhaps transcending them. Sadie Bennings's assemblage of photographs and other images reflects imagery of gay youth with a beefcake muscle stud, a sensuous male with a swimmer's build, and what appears to be a cisgender male figure in a coffin—the person seems to have died young. Might it symbolize the death of the self, or perhaps the result of AIDS? Around these smaller likenesses are circles and crosses signifying the decoupling of the symbol for female gender.

The Contested Body's strongest piece is George Segal's sculpture of two bandaged women in physical communication with each other. Its human models were actually art critic Jill Johnston and the woman who was her partner at the time. Moreover, it was created in 1969, the same year as the Stonewall riots, so its theme of lesbian identity has singular potency.

Enhancing Segal, Bennings, and the various other artists, is Sharon Hayes's audio made in 2007-08, *I March in the Parade of Liberty But As Long As I Love You I Am Not Free*. The content voiced contains slogans from early gay liberation parades, allusions to the US-led invasion of Iraq, and the *De Profundis* love letter Oscar Wilde sent to Lord Alfred "Bosie" Douglas from Reading Gaol.

The Contested Body. Image courtesy of the Minneapolis Institute of Art

DANCE! DANCE! DANCE! THE WORLD OF BUSBY BERKELEY

Thursdays through Aug. 30
Heights Theater, 3951 Central Ave. NE
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Busby Berkeley (1895-1976) looms as early sound cinema's signature director and choreographer of musicals. His kaleidoscopic configurations of female dancers in the "Showgirl" tradition still mesmerize to astounding effect. What's more is that the images we see in his films were staged and shot in Hollywood studios and not influenced by high tech special effects. The coordination of the dancers exemplifies concentration and precision of the highest order under the pressures of lights, cameras, and cuts.

During his service in World War I as a Field Artillery Lieutenant for the U.S. Army, it is generally thought that it was watching military drills that planted the roots of Berkeley's distinct style. In the 1920s he choreographed several stage musicals on Broadway. In the '30s, he was utilized by powerful Hollywood producer Samuel Goldwyn for the expanding movie industry, and the rest, as they say, is history.

You can see some gorgeous images from that history on the region's most sumptuous classic movie theater's widescreen, the Heights, in Columbia Heights. Their current *Dance! Dance! Dance! The World of Busby Berkeley* series signifies their loving commitment to the history of film in our own present time when entertainment seems to always be about Now! Now! Now!

If you're somewhat familiar with movie history, you've likely heard the term "gold digger" as synonymous with the Busby Berkeley canon. On Aug. 16, you can catch *Gold Diggers of 1935*. The vibrantly wholesome Dick Powell impressed in this joyous film as a med student performing as a singer at a Catskills resort. Powell is hired by a mother to escort her daughter, despite the fact that he is engaged to be married to another young woman. Its famous number, *Lullaby of Broadway,* glistens with tapdance that will take your breath away.

Minnesota's Judy Garland played her first adult role, along with another Hollywood singer-dancer giant, Gene Kelly. This incomparable couple creates romance in 1942's *For Me and My Gal* (Aug. 23), which was directed by Berkeley. However, it was Bobby Connolly who choreographed its vaudeville theatrical numbers matched with tunes from the World War I era.

Dance! Busby Berkeley Series. Photo courtesy of Warner Bros.

One of the towering (literally) images of Old Hollywood features Carmen Miranda in *The Lady in the Tutti Frutti Hat*: a sensuous number with lots of scantily clad women dancing with large bananas. The innuendo was enough to get *The Gang's All Here* (Aug. 30) banned in Brazil, Miranda's home country. What was Berkeley's first color film as a director became a camp classic. It's surrealistic imagery was beyond the norm of the conservative Hollywood studios.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

Dear Lenny. Photo by Dan Norman

DEAR LENNY: BERNSTEIN'S LIFE IN SONGS & LETTERS

Through Aug. 26
Open Eye Figure Theatre, 506 E 24th St.
Minneapolis
612-874-6338
www.openeyetheatre.org

This is the 100th anniversary of the birth of Leonard Bernstein, who passed away in 1990 at age 72. He was actually a household name for being the music director of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. In the early years of television, he presented lectures on classical music. Though best known for his *West Side Story* score, his music for *Candide* and *Wonderful Town* is also beloved. Bernstein is also known for *Chichester Psalms, Mass*, and film music from *On the Waterfront*.

Acclaimed Twin Cities performer Bradley Greenwald wowed audiences three years ago with a retrospective on another great music figure, Jacques Brel, for Chronoform Productions, and now he's back with a Leonard Bernstein retrospective. The performer has gleaned much of the piece's content from what he calls "unbelievably rich correspondence he had with everyone who was famous in the 20th century. These letters are more than the 'How-are-you-I-am-fine' updates, or clever witty missives. They contain intimate and profound discussions written to and from not only a composer, but a world-renowned conductor and pianist, an educator, a son and husband and father. The letters chronicle a Jewish, not-completely-discreetly-gay, socially enlightened American—with an open file at the FBI—not only breaking through, but dominating the elite cultural world of New York. The letters delve intimately into the art, sexual identity, and progressive politics of a Renaissance man who worked to erase the boundaries separating 'high' from 'low' music, and the 'high' and 'low' American. Knowing the struggles, angels and demons of the artist behind the music makes performing the songs a profoundly rich experience."

'NIGHT, MOTHER

Through Sept. 8
Grain Belt Warehouse, 77 13th Ave. NE
Minneapolis
612-401-4506
www.darkstormy.org

Rocky parent-adult child relationships have been the source of great drama and Marsha Norman's Pulitzer Prize-winning *'night, Mother* is one the most devastating. Its subject is Jessie, a daughter in her 30s, who makes it clear to her mother, Thelma, that she fully intends to commit suicide because of marital problems and a son with crime and addiction issues. This heavy drama shifts from Thelma realizing that Jesse is actually serious to passionately trying to convince her not to go through with it.

Sara Marsh and Sally Wingert have co-acted in previous Dark and Stormy Productions, and they pair up again in *'night, Mother* under the direction Haley Finn. Recent high profile suicides such as Anthony Bourdain, Jill Messick, and Kate Spade show that the concern is always with us. As

'night, Mother. Photo by Heidi Bohnenkamp

Marsh points out, "There is never a wrong time to do this play, because it's always important to address the issue and impact of suicide right now whenever now may be."

'night, Mother requires a mutual vulnerability shared between the actresses playing its roles. Marsh says of Wingert: "We have a singular trust and chemistry, and I wouldn't want to do this play with anyone else. And that's the thing: this beautifully crafted piece is far more than just an issue play, and that's what I love about it and what makes it both effective and meaningful. Jessie and her mother, Thelma, are characters we care about. We as actors, we as the audience—we care that Jessie sees no value in moving forward, that the only peace she sees is in ending her life, and we care that despite the fact that they live together, her mother is absolutely stunned by that revelation, and about her mother's inability to understand or accept it. We are as frustrated with the two of them as they are with each other, and we are as heartbroken as they are in their deep desire to reach each other and their failure to do so over and over again."

Marsh emphasizes: "They are two people who love each other and don't know how to communicate, who can't figure out how to make themselves heard and understood, and that is the essence of being human. We all want to be loved, we all want to be heard, we all want to be accepted for who we are, we all want to be understood, and we all want to be safe. And that's why we care about Jessie and Thelma, that's why *'night, Mother* is so haunting, why it moves us, and why there is never a wrong time to produce it." ■

Get Ready For Duluth Superior Pride!

Once again, the Duluth Superior region in Northern Minnesota will be breaking out the rainbows for its annual Pride celebration. Through Sept. 2, enjoy a wide array of fun events at Duluth-Superior Pride:

MAYORS RECEPTION

Aug. 30, 2018

Historic Union Depot

To kick off Duluth's Pride celebration during Labor Day weekend, Mayor Emily Larson and mayors from surrounding communities will welcome residents and visitors for the Pride opener at the Historic Union Depot. The event will include food, cocktails, live music, an aerialist performance, and more. Following the reception, enjoy A Very Pride Burlesque performance by the Duluth Dolls.

PARTY X 2018

Aug. 31, 2018

The Duluth Flame Nightclub

Prepare yourself for a wild night of drinks and revelry at The Duluth Flame Nightclub with the annual "Party X" celebration. The event also serves as a fundraiser for Duluth Superior Pride.

13TH ANNUAL HUMMINGBIRD 5K

Sept. 1, 2018

Bayfront Festival Park

This family-friendly 5K returns for Duluth Superior Pride at a new venue in Bayfront Festival Park. The 5K is held in honor of Duluth resident Hummingbird and his contributions to the local GLBT community, and also serves as a Duluth Superior Pride fundraiser.

Photo by Sophia Hantzes

BAYFRONT FESTIVAL & HISTORICAL COLLECTION

Sept. 1, 2018

Bayfront Festival Park

Celebrate Pride in Duluth's 32nd annual festival at Bayfront Festival Park, which will feature beer tents, exhibitors, vendors, games, and live music. The free event will also feature an exhibit showcasing 32 years of history in the Twin Ports.

PRIDE BLOCK PARTY

Sept. 1, 2018

Tower Avenue

The Main Nightclub and The Flame Nightclub will team up for a Pride-themed Block Party for the ages! For $10, you can party it up on Tower Avenue for a dual-bar block party, with the cover allowing entry into both clubs. All proceeds go towards Duluth Superior Pride.

WORSHIP AT PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Sept. 2, 2018

Pilgrim Congregational Church

Pilgrim United Church will host an inclusive service of worship, welcoming all people including the GLBT community. The event will include music, poetry, and more.

DULUTH SUPERIOR PRIDE PARADE

Sept. 2, 2018

Broadway and Banks, Superior, WI

Break out the rainbows for a splendid celebration on Broadway and Banks in Duluth and Superior! The free event begins at noon at Tower Avenue and travels through the Alley Entrance at the Main Club.

FOO FOO CHOO CHOO

Sept. 2, 2018

The Duluth Depot

All aboard! Hop on a scenic three-hour train ride up the shores of Lake Superior. This 21+ event includes a live DJ, dancing, a cash bar, and stunning views of the Lake. Tickets are $30.

For more information, including directions and event details, visit www.dspride.com. ■

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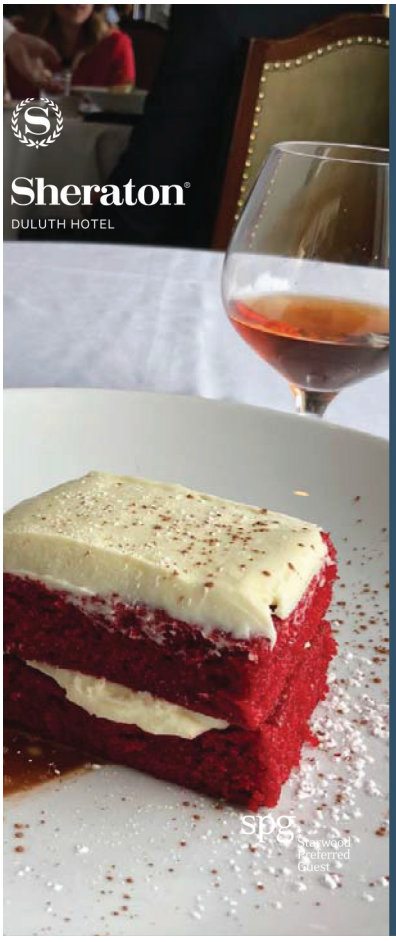

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TRAVEL | BY CARLA WALDEMAR

The Rideau Canal connects the city of Ottawa to both the Saint Lawrence River and Lake Ontario. Photo courtesy of Ottawa Tourism

O, Ottawa

I've just returned from the nation's capital, and I heart the heck out of it.

No, not our capital. Rather, that of our kinder, gentler northern neighbor, Canada. Ottawa anchors the eastern border of Ontario, springing from a British heritage, while just across the river lies Francophone Quebec—a best-of-both-worlds combo for tourists to savor.

My hotel, the grande dame Chateau Laurier, rises like a castle above the 4.8-mile Rideau Canal, which empties into the Ottawa River. In spring bikers and joggers enjoy the canal's 750,000 tulips; in winter's freeze, it becomes a skating path. It's where the city came into being as a trading post.

Still is. Today, the nearby ByWard Market—block upon block of indie boutiques, lively pubs and dining spots and summer's outdoor farmers market—is a magnet for locals and tourists alike. A tasty intro is a walking tour by C'est Si Bon, with ten stops at food haunts such as Maple Country Sugar Bush, to discover the difference between light and dark syrup and learn the story of the famous maple sugar heist—"a uniquely Canadian crime," allows its owner.

House of Cheese provides samples of regional specialties, while a shack called Beaver Tail dispenses this iconic pastry, sprinkled with sugar and cinnamon and served with a squirt of lemon to balance the sweet. Le Moulin de Provence Bakery nearby sells its famous Obama cookie—the one our former prez enjoyed.

Shops like Corazon de Mais (yummy tacos) and steaming naan from Shafala Bazaar hail the city's multi-culti heritage. Cupcake Lounge ruins your diet with treats like its Earl Grey tea and pineapple-upside-down numbers. Cocktails, too. The finale is a bite from the small-plates menu at Play, a locovore-forward café.

More foodie finds: Riviera, anchoring a former bank building, draws trendsters for its famous pastas (lobster spaghetti, anyone?) abetted by starters like my assembly of Canadian mushrooms lavished with black truffle and a poached egg atop rich brioche toast, followed by a salad of citrus, endive, ricotta and walnuts. Check out the forward cocktail list, too.

Metropolitain Brasserie draws the Parliament Hill crowd to its raw bar; they linger for classic Parisian fare, ranging from bouillabaisse to steak frites. I slurped my own weight in oysters, then demolished steak tartare, followed by profiteroles. At the Chateau's La Terrasse—the city's premier open-air dining destination—savor cheese and charcuterie plates or fork up an elegant salmon tartare. I followed up with a lobster roll, then a chocolate-cherry tart with red licorice sorbet (yes, it works). Swell cocktails again. (This is getting to be a habit.)

After dinner, Parliament Hill is the place to be in summer. Join throngs seated on the grass for the Northern Lights sound & light show

across Parliament's façade, unscrolling the story of the nation's history. Return in the morning for the heart-thumping Changing of the Guard to watch as kilt-clad pipers precede the booming brass of soldiers in jaunty red jackets and beaver hats marching to "Red River Valley" and excerpts from (huh?) "Don Giovanni" before assembling with musket thumping and clicking heels. Return Wednesdays for noontime yoga or Sunday's zumba (all of the above are free).

Another fun freebie: the nearby Bank of Canada Museum, far from the yawner you might expect. Create your own avatar (mine: blonde mermaid) to interactively explore finance moves that affect you (inflation, budgeting, etc.)

Must-see museums are Ottawa's forte, starting at the National Gallery of Canada, designed by starchitect Moshe Safdie and anchored on its plaza by Maman, the mammoth spider mascot sculpted by Louise Bourgeois. Traverse its galleries rich with all the bold-name Europeans, then discover the newly-integrated work of First Nations artists; Canada's iconic Group of Seven, up-ending landscape painting; and arresting contempo pieces. Scoot over to the brand-new Ottawa Art Gallery highlighting that Group of Seven plus First Nations artists' modern takes on canoes: one birch, another of cereal boxes.

The Canadian War Museum, a favorite on a previous visit, drew me back to experience war's unsettling effects. Follow paths depicting Canada's role in the Boer War ("the dirty war")—its first international conflict, then the War of 1812 with us; World Wars I and II (wherein Nazis torpedoed Canadian harbors) and ensuing battlegrounds, from Korea to Kandahar. Through newsreels, artifacts and oral accounts the bloody stories are unreeled, asking, finally, "Why does war matter?" A new National Holocaust Museum stands, fittingly, just across the street.

Then cross the river into Quebec for the much more mellow and beautiful Mosaiculture in Jacques Cartier Park. Here (through October 15) 40-plus larger-than-life sculptures are fabricated entirely of plants: an uber-owl; a Chinese dragon; a mega-hunter stalking giant polar bears; a grander-than-grand piano.

From here it's a short stroll to the Museum of Canadian History, recently reorganized to educate visitors on not only the Vikings' arrival and accomplishment of the ensuing Brits and French, but also the treatment/extinction of First Nations people and mixed-race Metis.

To mingle with locals, venture into their neighborhoods, too. Head to Lansdowne for its lively Sunday farmers market (crafts and food court too). Continue to the Glebe to patrol avenues lined with shops and eating ops. Detour to the nearby Remic Rapids portion of the river to gaze on the dozens of balanced-rock sculptures artist John Ceprano constructs anew each spring as a paean to nature and meditation on water, he says: "a chance to get out of myself." And mighty popular.

Hit Wellington Street West to discover indie establishments in which to eat, drink and shop, particularly at Maker House, filled with fanciful all-Canadian products, including wooden bow ties, paper deers' heads, leather six-pack carriers, and a book called How to Move to Canada.

I'm tempted. To plan your own visit, check out www.ottawatourism.ca. ■

OTTAWA'S GAY SCENE

Canada has a long legacy of acceptance. It was the fourth nation in the world to legalize gay marriage, in 2005. Ottawa's mayor is gay, and he's frequently spotted in the city's Gay Village, says Christian Garceau, organizers of the Village Gay Legacy Project and also affiliated with Capital Pride. He's guiding me on a walking tour of the Village, via a new app available for self-touring. It documents the area's rich GLBT history, past and present, pointing out historic gay bars and business establishments—although Christian notes that "gay bars" as such are obsolete today, thanks to wide acceptance everywhere. (Not so back in the day, when Canada once employed a "fruit detector" machine to out closeted citizens—for which Trudeau publicly apologized in 2017.) Crosswalks are painted in the hues of the rainbow flag, and gay-history murals bloom on many a building. Christian points out gay-owned establishments such as Stroked Ego (clothing, accessories), Bridgehead (coffee shop), Clover Food & Drink (gay hangout), Venus Envy (high-end sex toys) and The Buzz (lesbian cocktail mecca).

Ottawa's first Pride Parade was a small affair, held in 1989; this year's three-hour extravaganza incorporates 125 groups and 50 floats. Capital Pride—August 19-26—includes a block party; family picnic; Alt Queer Art & Fashion Show; Nature Nocturne event; youth clothing swap and art show—plus pageants, musical acts and more, more, more. Check out www.ottawacapitalpride.ca.

Regardless of the season, the city of Ottawa is a treasure to behold. Photo courtesy of Ottawa Tourism

Mike Meyer, pictured here with many of his clients, is the owner of dogwalking service Lofty Dogs. Photo by Kassidy Tarala

DADDY DOG CARE

Lofty Dogs offers one-of-a-kind dog walking service to dog owners of the Twin Cities.

By Kassidy Tarala

Mike Meyer has been running Lofty Dogs for the last three years. Photo by Kassidy Tarala

Mike Meyer parlayed his experience in the corporate world to start his own dogwalking company. Photo by Mike Meyer

In the human world, he's known as Mike Meyer, but in the dog world, he's Daddy. Locals might recognize him walking around the parks, making his way through the streets of the city, collecting a new dog at each apartment he passes. With ten dogs in tow, he can be found gleefully leading his puppy posse along the river, rain or shine.

Mike Meyer is many things, but above all he's an animal lover. After working for a dog walking business in Minneapolis for three years, Meyer had friends in St. Paul reach out to him asking if he knew of anyone with a similar service in St. Paul. Though no one came to mind, Meyer decided that he would soon be the only one who would come to mind. And Lofty Dogs was born.

Meyer came up with the name for his company based on two ideas. First, Meyer wanted his company to primarily be for people in communal housing, such as apartments, condos, and—you guessed it—lofts. Second, he wanted the name to represent what his company truly is, which is far more than a dog walking service.

"We work to achieve a higher level of behavior for the dogs. We don't just walk them, but we spend a lot of time training them, too. Our goal is to always aim higher, to be lofty," Meyer says.

Before Lofty Dogs, Meyer worked in nonprofits, for-profits, and large corporations, which he quickly discovered were not for him. In search of a job that would allow him to get exercise, be outdoors, and spend time helping people and working with animals, Lofty Dogs was calling.

"I feel really lucky and blessed to be able to get paid to go outside and get exercise and be surrounded by these dogs," he says. "The best part is they never talk back. They always do what I ask!"

Meyer says he's been an animal lover his entire life, and not only is he drawn to animals, but animals are also drawn to him. In particular, Meyer especially enjoys spending time around dogs because of their brilliance and unconditional love.

"They really are all about unconditional love, which is such a 'lofty' goal for all of us as human beings. We can learn from dogs about how to take joy in literally every single thing in life. That's the life I want to create for myself," he says.

Lofty Dogs is unique from other dog walking services because it truly goes far beyond walking dogs. Meyer says that when he trains new employees, he has them really get to know each dog, so the dogs know who and what to expect every day.

"Everyone's minds and bodies should be challenged. We do 60 to 90 minutes outside every day with training built into it. We get a whole pack of dogs to just sit and relax together," Meyer says. "We also give training advice to clients, and our prices are only $20-25, so it's affordable for any dog owner."

Other than maintaining a happy, clean, and safe environment for the dogs, Meyer says he runs his business on the idea of a winning equation for everyone involved—the five wins: clients, dogs, the apartment buildings, fans on Facebook and Instagram, and the employees.

Though Lofty Dogs doesn't have an extremely prominent GLBT clientele, Meyer says the majority of Lofty Dogs' Facebook and Instagram fans are of the GLBT community. He says he's also always looking for more GLBT clients and welcomes anyone to join.

As a gay business owner himself, Meyer says he encourages everyone to find a balance in their lives where they feel comfortable and confident. He says the best place to be is balanced in the middle ground because it allows you to get the best perspective and really understand both sides of things.

"Everyone is really the same deep down with little differences that make us all unique," Meyer says. "I hope, as a gay business owner, that I can influence both sides of the coin and make people realize its all about spreading love, being creative, and sharing ideas."

As Daddy of the dogs struts his way through the cities, he's just an ordinary guy with his fans, er, very full. But to Meyer, he's living the dream.

"I've struck gold. I get to be surrounded by dogs and nature, and while I'm teaching them, they're teaching me, too," he says. "It's a beautiful thing that just fills me up, it fills my heart up. Now I'm at the point where I just get to see [Lofty Dogs] grow and grow and grow. Every week day year-round, no matter the weather, I'll be here. Just like the U.S. Postal Service."

For more information about Lofty Dogs, visit their website at loftydogs.com. ■

Sarah Aune, seen with Sarge, Riley and Wynston, is the service manager for Come, Sit, Stay. Photo by Andrew Gresham

THE PUPPY COMMANDMENTS

COME, SIT, STAY PROVIDES CARE AND EXERCISE FOR PETS IN MINNEAPOLIS, EDINA, ST. LOUIS PARK, AND ST. PAUL.

By Kassidy Tarala

Come, Sit, Stay is the name of the business, but the lessons it teaches our furry friends extend far outside of those three puppy commandments. Since February 2010, Come, Sit, Stay has been providing dog walking and pet sitting services to pet owners throughout the Twin Cities, Edina, and St. Louis Park.

"At that time, I was looking for a career change and wanted to pursue business ownership along with move into a field working with animals. My original concept started as an overnight pet care service business. However, when Sarah Aune joined the team, we quickly grew to include daytime dog walking and pet sitting," says Come, Sit, Stay owner Megan Sellheim. "We started very grassroots through word of mouth to friends and family. Word spread, and we continued to work with more clients. Now, eight years later, word of mouth referrals still makes up 50 percent of our new business."

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Jae Gullings, pictured with Maya, is one of Come, Sit, Stay's various dogwalkers. Photos by Andrew Gresham

Sellheim says Come, Sit, Stay offers dog walking and pet sitting services by duration, and they customize the care provided based on the client's and their pet's needs.

"Our most popular service is a 30-minute dog walk, but we offer services from 15 minutes up to a multi-night overnight stay. We also offer unique pet services like pet taxi, wedding accompaniment, and birth support," she says.

Come, Sit, Stay strives to offer flexible, reliable, and caring services to its clients. Sellheim says their philosophy and motto are that they are "partners in the care of your pet" because they work with each client individually to provide a customized service based on what best serves that particular client and their pet, which go all the way down to the nuances and details of varying schedules, potty and exercise needs, dietary and medication needs, and special care in relation to pet behavior and temperament.

Sellheim says Come, Sit, Stay is welcome to anyone with a pet who wants a convenient and caring service. Many of Come, Sit, Stay's clients are GLBT, all of whom have greatly contributed to the growth of their business by referring their friends and family, she says.

"We are always happy to provide service to pet owners of all kinds of identities and family structures," she says.

According to Come, Sit, Stay dog walker Andrea Bartsch, the company isn't just accepting to all of its clients, but to its employees, too.

"The best way I can describe it is I've never seen or felt any kind of discrimination towards myself, my coworkers, or our clientele. It's a very welcoming environment for everybody," Bartsch says.

Bartsch says Come, Sit, Stay is unique from other dog walking services because all of the employees work hard to provide individualized services to each and every pet that they work with. Also, many people throughout the Twin Cities, Edina, and St. Louis Park like supporting Come, Sit, Stay because it's a small local business.

"I love the flexibility and freedom that comes with the job. It's very nice to feel independent in that way," Bartsch says. "I can pop some tunes on, walk around the city, get lost in my thoughts, and pet cute pups all at the same time!"

Jae Gullings, another dog walker at Come, Sit, Stay, says the company's inclusivity and welcoming atmosphere are what initially drew them in.

"I know there are many GLBTQ clients that we serve, and as a queer and genderqueer individual, I feel they are very inclusive and open to all identities. I loved that in the interview process I was asked what my pronouns were and that felt really good (I use they/them so it makes me feel all warm and fuzzy inside when folks ask this question)," they say.

Jae says their favorite part of working at Come, Sit, Stay is working with the dogs because they never judge anyone, and instead they love everyone they meet.

Come, Sit, Stay service manager Sarah Aune says they're known for their flexibility, reliability, and ability to tailor their services to each client's individual needs.

"Our team collectively has a great deal of experience with dogs, cats, and other pets of a wide range of temperaments and breeds. We offer medication and injection administration as part of our service, as well as pre-scheduled/on-call pet care in preparation for the birth of a new baby and pet-accompaniment for weddings," she says.

Aune says she has been with Come, Sit, Stay for eight years—since the beginning—and she continues to have fun and enjoys doing rewarding work with animals.

"I get a lot of satisfaction from the direct work I'm doing in caring for pets and walking dogs during my work days. I also very much value being part of and helping to manage a team of highly responsible, caring, fun, and hardworking people," she says.

For more information about Come, Sit, Stay, visit comesitstaytc.com. ■

Come, Sit, Stay founder Megan Sellheim, pictured with Maynard and Stampy. Photo by Andrew Gresham

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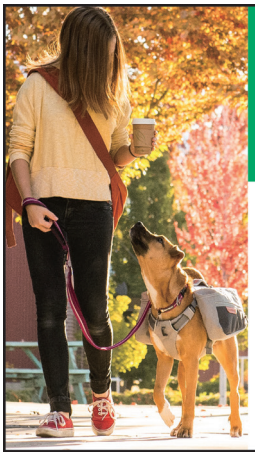

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Fighting For Our Feline Friends

Minnesota-based no-kill organization Feline Rescue helps find the furriest of friends new homes.

By Kassidy Tarala

After the Animal Relief Fund (ARF) closed its shelter in 1997, a group of ARF volunteers decided to form a new organization that included a shelter facility, and just like that, Feline Rescue was born. Originally located on Charles Avenue in St. Paul, the organization had a strong group of donors and funds right off the bat, which helped Feline Rescue purchase its current location on Fairview Avenue in St. Paul.

"Over the years, Feline Rescue grew, expanding and enhancing its shelter, foster, and outreach programs," says Dana Andresen, Feline Rescue executive director. "The small number of volunteers 20 years ago now has increased to more than 400 who do everything from greeting visitors, cleaning litter boxes, feeding and entertaining cats, socializing cats, administering medications, providing foster care, bottle feeding kittens, rescuing cats in danger, and helping with spay/neuter clinics, to planning and staffing events, speaking to the community, raising funds, producing communication materials, photographing cats, developing and maintaining Facebook and web presence, maintaining databases, and helping with administrative tasks."

For most of its existence, Feline Rescue was staffed entirely by volunteers, but other paid employee positions have been created since 2013. However, Andresen says the volunteers always have been and always will be the lifeblood of this organization.

According to the company's vision and mission statements, Feline Rescue works to make sure that no cat is unwanted by providing shelter, veterinary care, socialization, and permanent homes for each cat.

"At Feline Rescue, cats always come first. We believe that teamwork and collaboration are critical to achieving our mission. We treat our stakeholders with compassion, dignity, and respect. And we have a lifelong commitment to each cat," Andresen says.

Feline Rescue is a no-kill cat shelter organization located in St. Paul. Photo by Kris Kaiser at KrisKreativ Photography

Feline Rescue provides rescue and relief services to all homeless and endangered cats in the community through programs that offer shelter, foster, social and medical rehabilitation, feral and stray management, spay and neuter subsidy, and community education.

"The volunteers who staff our three programs (foster, outreach, and shelter) and administrative office donated more than 78,000 hours, fielded over 10,000 phone messages, received more than 200,000 emails, and sent approximately 117,000 emails," Andresen says. "All of these efforts contributed to the continued increase in intakes (1,241) and adoptions (1,120) in 2017. In addition, our outreach volunteers arranged the subsidy of 1,444 spay/neuter surgeries, supporting 26 rescues and shelters statewide and numerous individual cat owners."

Andresen says Feline Rescue is always in need of more volunteers for their three programs, as well as administrative, marketing, and other operations. Though they are currently in the process of revising their volunteer application, Andresen says she encourages anyone interested in volunteering with Feline Rescue to provide their information on their website felinerescue.org/volunteering.

"Up to 70 cats are housed and rehabilitated at our adoption center at any one time. The majority of cats housed at our facility are allowed to roam freely most of the time and are not kenneled. Cats may be kenneled during introductions to a new space, when receiving medical treatment, or during behavioral rehabilitation. We are fortunate that some of our regular visitors stop by on their lunch hour or after work to visit the cats. Some do this daily and have been for years," Andresen says.

She says Feline Rescue works hard to treat each cat as an individual and to keep each cat's personal needs in mind when caring and sheltering the cats. The volunteers and community members who give their time to Feline Rescue help make this possible.

"We work collaboratively with the community to provide resources and assist in retaining cats in the home. A story told today is similar to many I have heard in the past. One of our outreach volunteers was talking about a woman she saw at the grocery store and the woman commented, 'You're the lady that helped me 20 years ago!' The relationships our volunteers have built with community members and other animal welfare organizations are strong and resilient, many lasting to this day," Andresen says.

Feline Rescue invites community members to some of its upcoming events including the 2018 Cat Video Festival on August 8 and Feline Rescue's annual Glitter Ball on October 13. More information can be found on their website at felinerescue.org/kittencam and felinerescue.org/glitterball.

For more general information about Feline Rescue, visit their website at felinerescue.org, their blog at felinerescue.blogspot.com, or visit their Facebook and Twitter pages at facebook.com/felinerescueinc and twitter.com/felinerescueinc. ■

Feline Rescue offers rescue and relief services to homeless and endangered cats in the area. Photo by Kelly Loeffler

SENIOR LIVING | BY KASSIDY TARALA

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Logo courtesy of Washburn-McReavy

Since 1857, William P. Washburn started what was called Washburn Undertakers, a funeral home, cemetery, and furniture store. Opening one year before Minnesota became a state, Washburn Undertakers truly became apart of the fabric of the Bold North. After being renamed Washburn-McReavy Funeral Chapels in 1931, the business continues as proof that only a family really understands what a family needs in a time of grief.

"The business was renamed due to my great-grandfather's involvement in the business. His name was Donald R. McReavy. My great grandfather died in 1949, and the business was handed off to my grandfather, William L. McReavy when he was 17. He, along with his mother—my great-grandmother—ran the business until he graduated from the University of Minnesota. It has been 161 years, and we are now in our fifth generation with three generations currently working for the company," says Funeral Director Brett McReavy.

McReavy says their business still offers funeral and cremation services, and they now assist with cemetery needs as they own and operate four cemeteries around the Minneapolis metro.

"We also own and operate our own cremation centers so we can help serve everyone, whether they wish to be buried in a casket or cremated. We also provide aftercare services where we provide families with different grief materials, newsletters, and local resources related to grief," he says.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

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Washburn-McReavy Funeral Chapels has extended far outside of the Twin Cities, and they now have 16 funeral homes as far north as Coon Rapids and as south as Bloomington. Their cemeteries are located in North Minneapolis, Bloomington, Northeast Minneapolis, and Crystal.

Outside of their physical buildings, McReavy says their newsletter has been especially helpful for family members and friends after the funeral service is over.

"Our newsletter is named Circle of Friends, and the families we have helped have found our newsletter to be very helpful and comforting," he says.

McReavy says they are able to accommodate families very quickly after a death has occurred, which helps families feel supported in a time of need. As long as everyone else involved—families, churches, cemeteries—is okay with the timeframe, they will be there to help day or night, rain or shine, he adds.

Though everyone deals with grief in different, unique ways, Washburn-McReavy Funeral Chapels are equipped and prepared to support all clients in any way they might need. McReavy says he believes the most important thing to do in a time of grief is to allow yourself to feel whatever emotions you need to feel.

"Although I am not a counselor or grief expert, I am a firm believer that it is healthy to cry and allow yourself to grieve. Many people view crying as a sign of weakness, which is absolutely false. I also believe that it is important to express yourself and talk about your feelings with someone, whether that be a friend, counselor, or even your funeral director," he says. "Talking about your feelings, your memories, etc. is important in the grieving process. I also suggest asking your funeral director for grief materials or suggestions. There are many groups and different resources available to you."

McReavy and the rest of the staff at Washburn-McReavy Funeral Chapels want their clients to know that they are here to help and provide support in any way they can. From providing materials or newsletters to listening to talking about the grief process, staff of Washburn-McReavy Funeral Chapels are sincerely working in support of those in grieving.

For more information about Washburn-McReavy Funeral Chapels and their services, visit their website at washburn-mcreavy.com or call 612-377-2203. ■

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RIDE REVIEW | BY RANDY STERN | PHOTOS BY RANDY STERN

2018 Chevrolet Cruze

While other manufacturers have been pulling back their lineups by eliminating sedans and hatchbacks from their portfolio, General Motors made a commitment to keep them on sale for us.

This is a good thing because there are some pretty good ones that GM's four brands sell.

For example, Chevrolet maintains a small car lineup that continues to attract buyers—from individual customers to fleet managers. They are efficient, loaded with technology, and are actually quite handsome.

There are some that truly stand out enough to be popular at Chevrolet dealerships. For example, the Cruze compact lineup of sedans and hatchbacks. It competes well in a class led by the Toyota Corolla, Honda Civic, Hyundai Elantra, and Mazda3. It also has its own unique qualities that attract buyers, such as a distinct design, a wide variety of trims and options, and a choice of engines based on the kind of fuel you want to put into it.

We were happy to welcome a 2018 Chevrolet Cruze hatchback with a diesel engine underneath its hood. Yes, we said it had a diesel engine.

Why talk about diesel after all of the recent controversies at other manufacturers regarding this fuel source? While those manufacturers affected by scandals and calls by the government in ensuring that emissions systems are legal, GM stuck to their guns by ensuring the Cruze diesel not only complies with these laws, but consumers still want it even when hybrid drivelines continue to attract customers looking for greater efficiency in their vehicles.

The diesel engine underneath this Cruze's hood is a 1.6-liter turbocharged unit. It offers 137 horsepower, but 240 pound-feet of torque. You certainly feel the latter when accelerating off the line and in passing maneuvers on the highway. Customers can choose between a six-speed manual transmission or a nine-speed automatic unit. Our tester had the automatic, which turned out to be a very smooth choice. In terms of fuel economy, we averaged 33.3 MPG. Chevrolet states that it should average 35 MPG and up to 45 MPG in this configuration. In fact, the sedan version of the Cruze Diesel can get up to 52 MPG with the manual transmission.

When you open up the fuel door, you see two caps behind it. One is the green cap for diesel fuel, which the Cruze can take up to a 20-percent bio-blend (B20) without any harm to the engine. The smaller blue cap is for Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF) to ensure cleaner emissions from the tailpipe.

Aside from the diesel engine, we found the Cruze had an enjoyable driving experience. Ride quality is pretty good with exceptional handling. You can corner the Cruze hatch as

you would a sportier compact, which will surprise those expecting a more mundane ride. Part of this comes from the Rallye Sport (RS) package upgrade, including a set of 18-inch alloy wheels on low profile Michelin tires. Not that wheels make the difference, but a good suspension does. It is perhaps the Cruze's big secret—and surprise.

Steering is good, with a tight turning radius and solid response. On-center feel is OK. The brakes are good, with solid pedal feel and response. Stops are equally good in normal and panic situations.

The driving experience with the diesel is pretty good. However, there is the rest of the Cruze to consider. Stepping inside the hatchback sedan is an attractive cabin that fits the driver well. Instrumentation is clear, but the cowl is low for taller drivers. Yet, you do get a smartly laid-out binnacle, including the information screen providing vehicle information and status. The low cowl does lend to easy access to the MyLink touchscreen and air conditioning controls. Steering wheel controls, including preset/track and volume controls on the back of the spokes, work just fine.

The seats were wrapped in a saddle-like leather Chevrolet calls Kalahari. This color is set in a two-tone throughout the cabin with black, giving the Diesel hatch an upscale look and feel. Front seats offer some support and comfort, but they are adequate for any distance of travel. There is plenty of leg room in the back, but taller people will find the headroom a bit challenging. All four doors open wide—up to almost 90-degrees.

Cruze hatchback customers enjoy 22.7 cubic feet of space behind the rear seat, expandable to 47.2 cubic feet with it folded down. The rear cargo area is protected by a cover that neatly is attached to the hatch when it is open.

Bose provided the sound to back the MyLink infotainment system. There are nine speakers that do a superb job of sound reproduction. You also get Apple CarPlay and Android Auto connectivity, along with an onboard Wi-Fi hotspot driven by OnStar. Of course, OnStar can help in the case of an emergency or to get directions when you are lost. One feature that is part of MyLink is Marketplace. This is where you can pay for diesel fuel or get some food and drink from the convenience of the Cruze.

One last thing to discuss on the Cruze hatchback is how handsome it is compared to the sedan. The shorter length—by 8.4 inches—lends to a more concentrated overall look, while maintaining continuity between it and the sedan up front. The longer roof and low profile also help to add to the handsomeness to the Cruze lineup. In fact, we prefer the hatchback over the sedan.

If we would suggest one thing for your Cruze, it is the sporty RS package. It adds a more aggressive look all around from the black egg-crate grille, rear spoiler, 18-inch alloy wheels, and a body kit for better aerodynamics and ground effects. This package is not just available for the Diesel model, but for gasoline-fueled LT and Premier trims, too.

The base price for the Cruze Diesel lineup is $23,820 for a manual transmission sedan. Our hatchback tester with the automatic transmission came with a fully-loaded sticker price of $31,370. Pricing for the gasoline-fueled Cruze with the 1.4-liter turbocharged engine starts at $16,975 for a manual transmission L sedan. Hatchbacks start at $21,320 for an LT trim model with the manual transmission.

We came away from the Chevrolet Cruze with a new appreciation for the brand. The buzz was that this generation of Cruze was good, as we confirm this. More so, we even would suggest looking at the hatchback before the sedan and consider the diesel before the gasoline model. Your pick of transmission is entirely up to you.

In fact, one of our colleagues saw our tester on one of our stints and considered this the coolest Chevrolet yet. You would be correct to agree with our outside colleague. We thought the same way, too. This should help to keep the Cruze on sale for years to come. We now know why GM is committed to cars—the Cruze is a good one not keep away from consumers at any cost. ■

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